

(b) the number of obsolete exchanges still in operation, district-wise;

(c) the steps being taken to complete the conversion of all exchanges into electronic exchanges in the State; and

(d) the funds allocated for the purpose during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) As on 24.2.1997, 1397 electronic exchanges are working in Tamil Nadu.

(b) As on 24.2.1997, 31 non electronic exchanges are in operation in Tamil Nadu. District-wise list is given in the attached Statement.

(c) In Tamil Nadu, all non-electronic exchanges are planned for conversion into electronic exchanges during 9th five year plan period.

(d) Rs. 74.87 cores (approximately) have been allocated for Tamil Nadu for replacement of non-electronic exchanges into electronic exchanges during the current financial year 1996-97.

Statement

District-wise List of non electronic exchanges in Tamil Nadu

Sl. No.	Name of the District	No. of non-electronic exchanges
1.	Chennai	8
2.	Periyar	2
3.	Kumbakonam	1
4.	Madurai	3
5.	Kanyakumari	1
6.	Salem	3
7.	Thanjavur	1
8.	Nellai Kattabomman	3
9.	Trichy	2
10.	Ambetkar	1
11.	Villupuram SSR	1
12.	Coimbatore	1
13.	Nilgiris	1
14.	Kamaraj	2
15.	Dindugal Anna	1
Total		31

[Translation]

Cancellation of Contracts

3008. SHRI NAVAL KISHORE RAI :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have noticed that irregularities were committed by the previous Govt. while awarding the contracts in Railway-sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof, project-wise;

(c) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry/ investigation in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) whether the Government have taken any decision to cancel these contracts; and

(f) if so, the details thereof along with the firms or persons to whom the contracts were awarded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No irregularities in award of contracts at the Ministry's level have been found. However, certain irregularities in award of contracts at Zonal Railways' level have been noticed.

(b) The contracts pertain to various Railways and various departments and construction projects as well as maintenance works and not confined to any particular project.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) 154 cases have been investigated and 16 cases are still under investigation. As a result of this, 99 Gazetted staff and 121 Non-gazetted staff have been punished.

(e) Yes, Sir. 5 contracts have been cancelled.

(f) (i) Contract for painting of bridge girders on Hubli Division on M/s V.G. Gokhale, Hubli;

(ii) Contract for removal of workshop refuse in Madras on M/s Zahir Steel Trading Corporation;

(iii) Contract for supply of mineral water for Rajdhani Express on M/s Sudhanjali Corporation Calcutta;

(iv) Catering contract for Jodhpur Express on M/s ABC Enterprise;

(v) Contract for dismantling of steel structures on M/s Union Sales Corporation.